

The Arlington Advocate

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SERVING THE RESIDENTS OF ARLINGTON SINCE 1872

THURSDAY, January 21, 1993

RECYCLING ROUTE THIS WEEK

INSIDE TODAY:



By E.H. Stockstill
ADVOCATE STAFF WRITER

Arlingtonians may be getting a new place in town to exercise: at the historic Regent movie house.

Although no specifics on the matter have been made available, the Regent Theatre's current owner Richard Sacco has proposed the idea of a health club at the 7 Medford Street location and is currently seeking special permits from the town's Redevelopment Board in order to proceed with renovation plans there.

Negotiations involving Sacco and individuals associated with the Venice, Calif.-based Gold's Gym Enterprises currently are underway, those involved in the process said.

Legal advertisements specifying Sacco's request for special permits

have appeared in The Advocate this month. A design review and hearing with the Redevelopment Board is scheduled next Monday in the town hall.

No official decision has been made about the proposal, local officials and Gold's officials said.

Arlington's current zoning bylaw would require the Redevelopment Board to issue special permits for any health club facilities at the site because of the nature of such a business and because of the proposed location.

Sacco declined to comment on the matter when contacted by The Advocate last week.

David Laird, who operates a Gold's Gym in the Greater Boston area, said that there have been "discussions with the people that own the Gold's

Gym name." He would not comment further on the subject, except to say that if current plans are worked out, the idea is to renovate the Medford Street site for use as a fitness complex.

"It will be a fitness center," he said.

Paul Grymkowski, director of licensing at Gold's Gym Enterprises, said that no final decisions have been made with regard to bringing a new health center to Arlington.

"A Gold's Gym location in Arlington, Mass. has not been approved at this time by Gold's Gym Enterprises," Grymkowski said in a telephone interview.

"It's an area that's being evaluated," Grymkowski said in a telephone interview.

"We have to look at that territory

and see where they're going," he said, referring to individuals who have been in contact with the company. "They've indicated to me that they've been looking at several locations. They have a plan B and a plan C. Why put all that work into one project and have it turned down because of the location?"

He would not specify other locations in Arlington that may be under consideration as possible places for a fitness center.

Neither Laird nor Grymkowski would say who is involved in negotiations, but Grymkowski said that more than one owner in the Greater Boston area has expressed interest in the Arlington idea.

According to Grymkowski, all of Gold's facilities are independently owned and operated. Special licens-

ing permission must be obtained from corporate officials in order to open a gym under the Gold's name, and an annual fee is paid in order to run a Gold's fitness center.

Currently there are 18 Gold's facilities in Massachusetts, including ones in Braintree, Boston, Everett, Woburn and Needham. Several others are slated for start-up, including one in Watertown, Grymkowski said.

Grymkowski said that competition often plays a part in the placement of a particular Gold's facility, and he said plans to open one in Watertown may muddy the waters in Arlington.

"There may not be enough distance between the two," he said. "We do try to determine a reasonable dis-

FITNESS, See page 14A

NEWS

■ A capacity crowd filled the church basement at First Baptist Church on Jan. 18 at a potluck dinner honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. About 250 people gathered to eat, sing, converse and listen to guest speaker Nia Al-Ghuiyy, an expert in African American history. "Martin Luther King's birthday means to me a time to reflect on all the African American members of the community who have given something to the community," said Al-Ghuiyy, who has worked with the Boston African American Historical Site. Recalling Dr. King's "I Have a Dream" speech, Al-Ghuiyy reflected on our society's apparent lack of progress toward racial harmony. "I think that it's going very slow," she said. "I think we've lost sight of what his dream is." Al-Ghuiyy continued, "All of us have dreams. My dream is that people would give at least one or two hours a week to community service."

One of the event's organizers, Pearl Morrison, praised First Baptist and presented Rev. Paul Jackson, the church's pastor, with an award of recognition. "This church has just been wonderful to the Martin Luther King Observance Committee," Morrison said.

Now in its fifth year, the MLK dinner drew a wide range of community members and political leaders. Some said this year's turnout was the highest one since the event's inception.

ELECTION NEWS

■ The Advocate will continue its traditional policy of printing statements from candidates for town offices. We kick off the spring election season with Election news and comment, page 10A.

SPORTS



Jodie Demers of Minuteman Tech dribbles past a Pope John player. For more sports, please see B section. (Advocate photo by Dennis Stein.)

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Harte-Hanks Community Newspapers

Regent Theatre may become fitness center

By E.H. Stockstill
ADVOCATE STAFF WRITER

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FITNESS, See page 14A



ADVOCATE PHOTOS BY TODD MAGLIOZZI

NO SEAT BELTS HERE

With several inches of new snow last Wednesday, Spy Ponder Field became prime sledding territory. Above, Brendan Seluta, Patrick Arnold, Scott Hayes, John Arnold, James Adams, and Jason Pugliese form a fast-moving flank. At right, Patrick Arnold takes the hill daredevil-style.



Snow budget weathers two storms

By E.H. Stockstill
ADVOCATE STAFF WRITER

sanding and other related work. December's heavy storm did minimal damage to Arlington, leaving six to 14 inches of snow and scattered power outages in its wake.

The town budgeted \$340,574 for snow and ice-related expenses this year. About \$200,000 has been spent to clean up after December's storm and last week's snowfall, according to Public Works Director Richard Bowler.

Town Manager Don Marquis said the town has budgeted the same amount for snow cleanup for the last 15 years. All communities are required under state law to at least level-fund their snow budgets.

Following December's blizzard and the seven to eight inches of precipitation that accumulated in town last week, however, Arlington currently finds itself in pretty good financial shape, according to public works officials. Other communities in the Greater Boston area have already exceeded their allotted expenses for snow-plowing.

"I think we've been fortunate in town," Bowler said, interviewed after the most recent

snowfall. "We weren't out there battling the cold and the wind."

Bowler also said there were no significant power outages in town last week, and he indicated that travelling on local thoroughfares has not been a major problem this time around.

"I think the job has come out very well," he said.

Two children were reportedly injured at Robbins Farm in sledding accidents, however, and several snow-related automobile accidents around town were reported to police last week (see police log, page 7).

According to Marquis, if the town does become strapped for snow-removal cash in the near future, any additional costs will be funded immediately and then later appropriated by Town Meeting. He said that no fund transfers via the Finance Committee are necessary in emergency circumstances.

Selectman Franklin Hurd said that it is difficult to foresee what will become necessary months in

SNOW, See page 14A

Town election draws crowd of candidates

By E.H. Stockstill
ADVOCATE STAFF WRITER

Experience versus change.

Those may be the watchwords in Arlington this year as an unusually large group of challengers prepares to face off against incumbents in the upcoming town election.

With a total of 21 candidates — the largest field in a town election in 25 years — competing for seats on only seven major boards and committees, the March 6 townwide contests could burn down a barn or two yet.

"This could be like old times," said Town Clerk Ann M. Powers, referring to elections years ago when campaigns were taken more seriously at the local level. Powers, who is running unopposed for her job in town hall this year, said the town could benefit if candidates actively campaigned for public office.

According to records for the last 25 years in the town clerk's office, this year's field tops the previous high of 19 candidates — the number seen in

1968, 1971, 1972 and 1975.

"I don't think anyone should run unopposed," said School Committee candidate Carolyn Simmons, who is running for re-election this year. "That gives you a diversity of opinions. I think it's good ... it's healthy."

Local elections haven't drawn many candidates or much public participation in recent years. Last year, only eight candidates, including a total of two challengers, ran for five offices, with a slim 15.11 percent of registered voters turning out to select their local officials. One candidate, Arthur Speros, ran for both Board of Selectmen and Board of Assessors, while Kenneth MacKenzie made a bid for a position on the School Committee.

In 1990 and 1991, respectively, 35 percent and 25 percent of all registered voters in Arlington turned out to participate in local elections.

Last year's voter turnout of 15 percent was the lowest in more than a decade, according to the Town Clerk's office. But this year could prove to be different.

"I think this is good for the town. I think voter turnout will be good," Powers said. But "it depends on how hard the candidates work."

Powers, Housing Authority Chairman John F. "Jack" Cusack, a real estate broker and former state representative, and Assessor Maurice H. O'Connell, an insurance specialist, are the three candidates without opposition this year.

In contrast, eight candidates are running for three open School Committee seats, including the seat committee member Patricia Worden earlier this month announced she was vacating. Four candidates, in fact, took out nomination papers after Worden announced her withdrawal from the race.

CANDIDATES, See page 13A

Holiday fund a success

By Robin Estrin
HARTE-HANKS STAFF WRITER

Readers of Harte-Hanks Community Newspapers, as well as corporate and individual contributors, made this year's Holiday Fund drive a success, giving 25 percent more to the needy than they did in 1991.

The Salvation Army/Harte-Hanks Community Newspaper Holiday Fund raised \$28,328 during this year's drive, the seventh annual sponsored by the newspaper chain. Last year's holiday campaign generated \$22,691.

The money will be distributed among Boston-area suburban communities, including Walth-



Holiday Fund

Officials consider lead paint restrictions

By E.H. Stockstill
ADVOCATE STAFF WRITER

Town policies on lead paint removal may be too strict for some landlords to abide by, local housing officials said this week.

But according to other officials, Arlington's policy, based on specific state standards, does not provide for any exceptions to its own rules. They also said protection of young children is the first order of business with the lead paint law.

Arlington Housing Authority officials recently debated the pros and cons of altering the town's policy in public housing cases where compliance with lead paint mandates has not been met due to financial or medical hardships, and other extenuating circumstances.

"There's no harm in a review every once in a while," Housing Director Jeremiah Donovan said in an interview. "We've been administering the policy."

But health officials told The Advocate that attempts to create special policy provisions for landlords who are unable to comply with local mandates due to hardships runs counter to state law.

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ARLINGTON NEWS

Rabid raccoon attacks dog, owner

By E.H. Stockstill
ADVOCATE STAFF WRITER

Rabies finally found its way into Arlington last weekend in the form of a wildly aggressive raccoon.

According to police and local health officials, a bellicose raccoon that attacked a dog and its owner last weekend and was subsequently destroyed was infected with a Mid-Atlantic strain of the viral disease, which has working its way up the eastern United States for the last several years.

Arlington resident George Paicopoulos and his English Setter were involved in the incident, but Health Director Walter Galvin said only the dog was bitten. According to Galvin, the setter was up-to-date on all its shots at the time of the incident but will have to be quarantined for three months.

According to officials, the raccoon was destroyed after reports to the police department about a raccoon acting in an unusual manner. Police also received reports that a raccoon had bitten a dog and tried to bite the person that was with it.

According to Police Director John Carroll, two reports, one from a Newport Street address and another from a Pine Ridge Road address, were received by police last week.

Police and health officials believe the same raccoon may have been seen in the two instances, because the two locations are in the same neighborhood.

"That could have been the same

raccoon," Carroll said, noting that there is a substantial amount of space in the neighborhood for raccoons to roam. "There's a good bit of open space for animals up there."

According to Galvin, the destroyed raccoon was sent to the state Department of Public Health on Monday to be tested. The results were received on Tuesday afternoon at 5:30 p.m., he said.

Galvin described the behavior of the raccoon as "aggressive" in nature.

"It was acting in an aggressive manner when they got it," Health Director Walter Galvin said. "The thing made a screeching noise when it went after him."

More than a dozen rabid raccoons have been found in Massachusetts in the past several months, including some in Belmont.

Last month, two skunks were destroyed in an East Arlington neighborhood after reports that the pair was fighting and behaving strangely. Damage done to the brains of the animals was too substantial for effective tests to be performed on them, local officials say.

The rabies virus is potentially lethal, and health officials are warning residents in the region to be cautious when interacting with wild animals. Trash cans should be sealed tight and extreme care should be taken whenever an animal exhibiting unusual or aggressive behavior is encountered, Galvin said.

Raccoons, skunks, dogs, cats and foxes are among the animals that are known to carry the rabies virus.

Elderly man dies in fall at Winslow Towers

BY THE ADVOCATE STAFF

A 66-year-old Arlington resident died over the weekend after falling to the ground from a sixth floor landing at the Winslow Towers, an elderly housing complex, according to police.

Henry O'Meara, a resident of Winslow Towers, was found in some shrubbery outside the complex sometime on Sunday, Jan. 17, according to Police Director John Carroll. Police received a report of the occurrence around 4 p.m. on Sunday, Car-

roll said. "Apparently it happened during the night," Carroll said.

Other tenants at Winslow Towers were interviewed by police, Carroll said, and none of them reported anything unusual on either Saturday, Jan. 16 or Sunday, Jan. 17.

"We have no reason to believe he jumped," Carroll said in reference to O'Meara. "He could have jumped or fallen."

Carroll said the possibility of a suicide has not been ruled out, but he also said that, due to last weekend's

weather conditions, O'Meara could have accidentally fallen off the landing.

O'Meara was dressed in his underclothing when he was found outside Winslow Towers, police said.

According to Carroll, members of O'Meara's family said he had appeared despondent and depressed in the days prior to the plunge.

Housing Director Jeremiah Donovan said the Winslow complex is designed in such a way as to guard against anyone falling off a landing at

higher floors.

"This building is safe," Donovan said. He also said there were no witnesses at the housing complex when the falling occurred.

Donovan did confirm that O'Meara was a resident at Winslow at the time.

The Arlington Housing Authority has its offices on the second floor of Winslow Towers, which is located on Mystic Street near the Community Safety Building.

CORRECTIONS

■ In the Advocate for Jan. 7, a news story incorrectly reported the charge on which Arlington resident John Irza was found guilty. The correct charge is indecent assault and battery of a person over 14.

■ Also, due to an editing error, an item in the Town Hall Round-up of the Advocate for Jan. 14 may have been misleading. Reorganization was not one of the named goals of the school committee. School officials and Selectmen have discussed reorganization of town government in the past but no agreement on goals has been reached.



The Animal Rescue League of Boston is urging pet owners to pay special attention to the winter hazards that may imperil pets. If pets must be left outdoors, state law requires that proper shelter be provided.

Local youths injured while sledding

Two children were treated at Symmes Hospital for head injuries following apparently unrelated sledding accidents, police said.

The youths, one from Somerville and the other from Belmont, were both injured around 2 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 18 while sledding down a steep, iced-over hill at Robbins Farm. According to police, both

children smashed into a wooden fence at the bottom of the hill while speeding down the incline.

According to police, Armstrong Ambulance transported one child to Symmes Hospital, while the Arlington Fire Department transported the other.

Both were treated at Symmes Hospital for head injuries. One was also

reportedly treated for neck injuries.

"It's just too steep ... and it's all ice now," Police Director John Carroll said of the hill the youths were sledding on. "When they start going down hills into yards, it's just too fast."

Hospital officials could not be reached to confirm the identities and status of the children by The Advocate's Wednesday press deadline.

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VIEWPOINT REAL ESTATE

with
Marie R. Monahan ARC, CRS, GRI
WHEN YOUR BUYER HAS A HOME TO SELL

Prospective buyers often have homes they must sell in order to purchase a new home. Sellers, on the other hand, may be reluctant to accept any offer that is contingent on sale of another property. If you receive such an offer, there are ways to structure the sale that can minimize the seller's risks.

First, you might put a limit on the amount of time the buyers have to accept an offer on their property. You can also keep your home on the market. If a second offer comes in, you may be able to reserve the right to refuse the first conditional offer unless the contingencies can be met within forty-eight or seventy-two hours.

Many sales that start out as contingent offers work well for the sellers. Your purchaser is not going to be in the best bargaining position and is less likely to ask for concessions on price or other terms. Each situation is different, however, and before you accept a contingent offer, you should go over the pros and cons of the particular situation with your Realtor.

For other viewpoints, opinions or advice on buying or selling real estate call us at Hunneman & Company/Coldwell Banker-Belmont at 648-5300.

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Political Advertisement

Political Advertisement

Political Advertisement

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Almaden 3.0 Liter.....	6.99
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Glen Ellen White Zinfandel 750 ml.....	3.99
Moet & Chandon White Star 750 ml.....	19.99

Not responsible for typographical errors. Prices subject to change without notice.

Harte-Hanks
Community Newspapers

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Joe Azcel 1st Place General
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SENIOR NEWS

ARLINGTON COUNCIL ON AGING
Dial-A-Ride
Important Information

All Dial-A-Ride I.D. cards must be renewed by Jan. 1 for 1993. Come into the Council on Aging Office at the Senior Center, 27 Maple St. to renew your card. There will be \$2 fee. If you cannot come, call 646-1000, Ext. 4720.

New DART telephone number

To order a ride: As of Jan. 1, Dial-A-Ride services will be provided by Arlex Taxi Company. Call 648-1000 to make your reservation at least one day in advance. TDD 648-1003.

New rules for ride discount

Dial-a-ride, a federally funded, town-operated discount transportation program, offers rides for senior citizens and handicapped persons within the town limits of Arlington.

Any town resident who can document age of at least 60 and retired, or who is physically handicapped, can register for a Dial-A-Ride discount card. The annual card fee is \$2. To receive a card, register at the Council on Aging office at the Senior Center, 27 Maple St., Monday through Friday, from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Call to order by mail.

Coupons in books of five or 10 can be purchased. While the new coupon system is being phased in, riders may continue to pay \$1.25 to the drivers. Participants my use up to 10 rides per month. For more information, call the Council on Aging at 646-1000. For the hearing impaired, TDD 648-8130.

Health counseling schedule

Thursday, Jan. 21, 1 to 2:30 p.m. and Wednesday, Jan. 27, 9:30 to 11 a.m. at Retired Men's Club; Thursday, Jan. 28, 1 to 2:30 p.m. at COA.

Links

The Links Program has been funded by W.R. Grace to "link" seventh and eighth grade students

with elders needing yard cleanup, raking leaves, pet care, etc. Dennis Mecurio is the school student coordinator. All arrangements for doing and monitoring work will be made between senior students and their parents. Interested seniors should call June Brooks, Monday through Thursday, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at 646-1000, Ext. 4720. She will pass the request to the school coordinator who will match seniors with students if they are available.

Storm cancellations

If Arlington public schools are closed due to inclement weather, Meals-on-Wheels will be cancelled. Please listen for announcements on your local radio stations, WBZ, WHDH, WEEI and WMJX.

SHINE hours change

COA health benefits counselors will be at the Council on Aging on Wednesdays, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., to provide free confidential assistance with questions on Medicare, MEDEX, health maintenance organizations, insurance claims forms, prescription drugs etc. To make an appointment, call 646-1000, ext. 4720. If you, for any reason, are unable to keep your appointment with SHINE, a call letting us know would be appreciated.

Minuteman Home Care
Eating Together meal site

Senior Center Luncheon Site, 27 Maple St.: Call site manager Marge Scott, 646-1000, Ext. 4747, for reservations and transportation. Drake Village Site, Hauser Bldg. 37 Drake Village Road: Call site manager Marilyn Bruno, at 648-7500, for reservations and transportation. Reservations are necessary. Menus may change without notice. Monday, Jan. 25, kielbasa; Tuesday, Jan. 26, chicken tarragon; Wednesday, Jan. 27, beef stew; Thursday, Jan. 28, stuffed cabbage; and Friday, Jan. 29, baked fish au gratin.

Project Hire

If you are in need of a companion, homemaker or health aide and you

live in Arlington or Lexington, contact June Brooks, at Project Hire/COA, at 646-1000, ext. 4720, Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., 27 Maple St., Arlington.

Social services notes

If certain personal problems have you or a member of your family troubled, don't keep them to yourself. Outreach worker, Diane Tainter, a licensed social worker, can help you with short-term counseling, nursing and retirement homes, emotional dysfunction and the like. For more information, call Tainter at 646-1000, Ext. 4720.

Senior Citizens' Law Project

The Senior Citizens' Law Project of Cambridge and Somerville Legal Services Inc. provides legal assistance to eligible Arlington Seniors at no charge. Legal assistance is available in the following areas, among others: Social Security, SSI, Medicaid, Medicare, evictions, and nursing home care. Call the intake line: 646-1000, ext. 4720 or ext. 4731. You can also meet with intake worker, Myrtle Joy, at the Arlington Council on Aging.

Drivers needed

Volunteers are needed for Meals-On-Wheels delivery, one hour per day, per week or per month. No number of hours is too small or too great. To set up a time to fit into your busy schedule, call the Council on Aging, at 646-1000, Ext. 4720.

It's tax time again

The Council on Aging is once again sponsoring the AARP TCE (Tax Counseling for the Elderly) program.

Trained volunteers will assist elders with filing their state and federal income tax returns.

The service will be provided starting Feb. 1 and end April 15, at the following locations:

Monday: COA, from 1 to 3 p.m.

Tuesday: Calvary Methodist Church, from 9 a.m. to noon

Thursday: St. James Rectory, from 1 to 3 p.m.

Friday: COA, from 9 a.m. to noon

Appointments are not necessary but are recommended. Call the COA at 646-1000, Ext. 4720 for an appointment.

Independence after vision loss

On Friday, Feb. 5, at 12:45 p.m.,

there will be a presentation for seniors at the Arlington Senior Center, 27 Maple St. Donna Burt, a rehabilitation specialist, from the Perkins Outreach Service to Elders Program, will speak on "Maintaining Independence After Vision Loss." All area seniors are invited to attend. This presentation is free and is sponsored by Arlington Guild For The Blind.

Attention: women

age 45 to 70

Tufts/USDA Human Nutrition Research Center on Aging in Boston, is currently looking for women age 45 to 70 who have low bone density to participate in an eight-day study. This study will determine if a deficiency of magnesium may contribute to age related bone loss.

If you are a healthy woman and at least two years postmenopausal you may qualify. While residing at the Nutrition Center, you will have your own private room with a view, bath, color television and telephone. Volunteers will receive \$500 for participating.

For more information, call 556-3300 and request study No. 360.

U.S.D.A. Human Nutrition Research Center on Aging at Tufts University, 711 Washington St., Boston, Mass. 02111.

Statements from Social Security

In January, the Social Security Administration mailed statements to approximately 42 million beneficiaries telling them the total amount of Social Security benefits they received in 1992. These statements are used in determining if any of their benefits are subject to federal income tax.

About nine out of 10 people who receive a Social Security Benefit Statement (Form SSA-1099) will not have to pay taxes on their Social Security benefits because their total income is less than the taxable ceiling. Beneficiaries whose Social Security payments are their only source of income are least likely to own federal taxes on their benefits.

An Internal Revenue Service (IRS) worksheet — Notice 703 — is part of the Social Security benefit statement. The worksheet gives step-by-step directions on how to determine if any benefits are taxable.

Beneficiaries who file an individual tax return may owe taxes on some

of their benefits if their combined income exceeds \$25,000. (Combined income is an individual's, or married couple's, adjusted gross income as reported on the Form 1040, plus nontaxable interest, plus one-half of the total Social Security benefits received for the year.) Married couples who file joint tax returns may have to pay taxes on some of their benefits if their combined income exceeds \$32,000. Married couples who live together but file separate tax returns probably will pay taxes on part of their benefits.

Beneficiaries who complete the worksheet and still have questions should call the IRS toll-free number, 1-800-829-1040 for assistance. They also can call this number to request Social Security Benefits and Equivalent Railroad Retirement Benefits (Publication 915), which contains tax information about Social Security benefits.

ARLINGTON SENIORS ASSOCIATION
Sunday Valentine Dance

Our Valentine Dance will be Sunday, Feb. 7. Dot and George will conduct the dancing. Daphne and Diane of "Unlimited Living" on Channel 3 are giving prizes of three mini-psychic readings. Refreshments will be served. Suggested donation is \$2.

Line dance for beginners

The basic steps of line dancing will be taught by Dottie and George every Thursday from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. The fee is \$2.50.

Cribbage

Cribbage instructions are available on Mondays at 1 p.m.

Senior overnight trips

April 12-15, Washington, D.C.

Four days, \$309 double occupancy. Six meals (three breakfasts, one luncheon, and two dinners). A Washington guide for the Capitol, White House, Embassy Row etc. Plenty of time for the Smithsonian Museums, accommodations at the new McLean Hilton Hotel. Deposit of \$25 is due by Feb. 20. Call Betty at 643-6143.

June 10, eight-day Mackinac Island Grant Hotel Tour: 12 meals are included in the price of \$999 per person double occupancy. Visits to Buffalo, Detroit, Henry Ford Museum, Mackinac Island (Grant Hotel), Frankenmuth Amish Country and Niagara Falls. Deposit of \$100 is due now. Cancellation insurance is available. Call Mary at 648-0311.

Day trips

Paddy Noonan and his Irish Variety Show: Paddy Noonan is directing the show and on the accordion. Choice of meal: baked Irish ham with raisin sauce or boiled Boston scrod. Entire package including meal, show and transportation via deluxe motor coach is \$38. Book early. Call 648-9018 on day trips.

Weekly programs

Sponsored by the Arlington Seniors Association, these programs are offered every week at the senior center. To join a class or group, call 646-1000, Ext. 4740 or 4743.

Monday, 9:30 to 10:30 a.m., exercise; 1 to 4 p.m. contract bridge.

Tuesday, 10 a.m. to noon, writers' workshop, 10 to 11:15 a.m., beginning line dance with Charlie Kay.

Wednesday, 10 a.m. to noon, informal knitting; 1 to 4 p.m., contract bridge; 1 to 3 p.m., beano; 9:30 to 10:30 a.m., exercise.

Thursday, 9 to 11 a.m., square dance lessons; 10 a.m. to noon, senior forum; 1:15 to 2:30 p.m., line dance class.

Friday, 9 to 10:30 a.m., yoga; 1 to 4 p.m., contract bridge or other games and pool lessons.

NEWS NOTES
Town has opening on drug and alcohol education council

The Town of Arlington has a vacan-

cy on the Council on Alcohol and Drug Education.

Anyone interested should send a letter of interest with a copy of their resume to the Board of Selectmen's Office, 730 Mass. Ave.

The Board also seeks anyone interested in serving on any other board or commission. Names will be kept on file; when a vacancy occurs the names will be reviewed.

You're taking me where? 99

If making a dental appointment for your baby is a surprising idea, remember that most serious injuries to children's teeth happen before the age of three, and that any injury to "baby" teeth may cause infection, pain or damage to the forming permanent teeth. That's just one reason why the first dental appointment should be soon after most of your child's primary teeth have appeared. Our office will not only correct existing problems, but also help you prevent new ones from developing through a program of oral hygiene, good nutrition and regular preventive visits. Want to know more? Give us a call—we'll help you discover why going to the dentist is definitely for babies!


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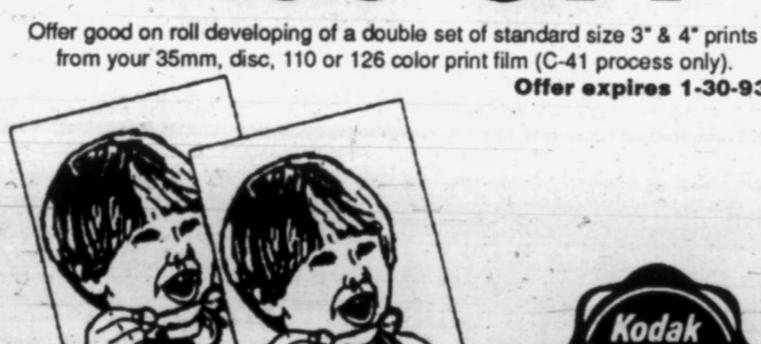
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ARLINGTON NEWS

HEALTH NOTES



turally insensitive or inconveniently located.

What are the barriers between people with diabetes and the care they need? How do the states compare in their methods of overcoming these barriers and what can be done to improve the situation? These are the questions explored in the American Diabetes Association's Diabetes Index.

Massachusetts scored a total of 281 points out of a possible 500 on the Diabetes Index. The state scored highest in the Provider category, and lowest in Policy measures. Massachusetts scored above the national average in four of the five categories.

Massachusetts received only 10 points out of a possible 100 for Policy measures, ranking the state 46th in the nation in this category. The only policies that benefit people with diabetes here are tax exemptions on insulin and syringes. There is no legislation mandating that health insurance cover persons with pre-existing conditions, patient education, diabetes testing materials or insulin.

Weight reduction clinics

Lawrence Memorial Hospital of Medford will be holding a free orientation session for its Weight Reduction and Health Management Program on Thursday, Feb. 11 at 6 p.m. in the LMH School of Nursing. For more information or to register call 395-2260.

Directory available for AIDS healthcare

No disease presents as compelling a test of a primary-care physician's competence, compassion and versatility as does AIDS. As much a social and cultural phenomenon as a health condition, AIDS requires not only a high standard of medical treatment, but attention to patients' psychological, legal and financial needs, as well.

Since 1990, primary-care doctors in Massachusetts have had easy access to experts dealing with various aspects of AIDS — from dentistry to counseling services to clinical trials of new medications — via the HIV Consultant Directory of Massachusetts, published by the Department of Community Health of Tufts University School of Medicine and the New England AIDS Education and Training Center. Now in its third edition, the directory is compiled and edited by Tufts medical students and sent free of charge to 400 primary-care physicians throughout the state.

"HIV disease is a true multidimensional challenge to the primary-care physician," said Dr. Robert Wesselhoeft, director of the Division of Family Medicine and assistant pro-

To preschool or not?

By Dr. Eva Balazs
SPECIAL TO THE ADVOCATE

(Dr. Balazs, a family therapist from Arlington, responds to letters sent care of The Advocate, 5 Water St., Arlington, Mass. 02174.)

Letter from Cindy C.:

All my friends are sending their kids to preschool. Some of them start as early as age two or 2½ and by the time the child is five, he or she had "graduated" from two preschool grades. What is the right thing to do? I don't feel like sending mine until the legal kindergarten age. My parents certainly didn't send me to school with diapers on.

Dr. Balazs:

You are right, Cindy; 30 years ago most children stayed at home until it was time to start school at the age of five. They played in the backyards and went next door to mingle with the neighbor's kids. The preschool concept didn't exist. But today a large number of parents feel they have to give a "jump-start" to their children to prepare them for the competitive world.

Don't send your child to preschool, Cindy, simply because "everyone is doing it." If he is happy staying at home with you or a babysitter who reads to him and takes him out to play with other children, don't worry. There will be no intellectual damage; skipping preschool will do him no harm. Children learn through play and learn on their own time and speed.

Even among experts there is disagreement. Many educators believe that children should not be pushed into academics in the preschool

years. They oppose teaching preschoolers to read, write, add and subtract and reject the use of workbooks and desk work.

On the other hand, preschool directors and many parents have been convinced that "real school" methods, like worksheets and computers can help children get a running start on education. So, who is right?

One thing is sure: whatever you decide, your decision will find substantial support, as well as arguments against it.

I myself tend to go with the first group, the developmental-educators, who believe that young children learn best when they are active through play and fun activities, when they are taught something that they enjoy; in short, informal lessons. What used to be a family or neighborhood affair — caring for young children — is now often handled by entrepreneurs and social service organizations of all sizes. In my own view, when it comes to child-rearing, I think we can still rely largely on our own experiences as children to guide us as parents.

In conclusion, I would say don't send your child to preschool just because others are doing it. Take into account your family situation, finances, your other children's needs and make your decision accordingly. Then come to terms with your decision and stick to it, Cindy. And thank you for your letter.

(Dr. Balazs, a licensed family therapist, will answer questions in this column. Her service is meant to be a complement to, not a substitute for, face-to-face counseling.)

they could learn about the services available to people with HIV disease," Wesselhoeft said.

The directory lists almost 250 providers of services geared for AIDS patients. The directory groups the services into 19 categories that include alternative medicine, clinical trials, education, legal services, nutrition, pharmacology, social work and substance abuse.

"It's important the healthcare providers have access to information that can help patients with HIV disease," said second-year Tufts medical student Sandi See Tai, who compiled the new edition of the directory with her classmate Amit Rakshit. "I was surprised by the number of services available to assist physicians."

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VA sets up women's post-traumatic stress treatment center

The Department of Veterans Affairs announced last week the establishment of a new division within the National Center for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder that will be devoted to the study of the impact of military trauma on the physical and psychological well-being of women veterans.

The first-of-its-kind center, located at the VA Medical Center in Boston, will be under the direction of Jessica Wolfe, Ph.D.

"While research and educational programs at the National Center have included women veterans, the Women's Health Science Division will be devoted to exclusively studying the effects of traumatic stress on women veterans," Wolfe said.

The division will conduct studies designed to improve the assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in women, as well as training in how to better respond to the disorder.

The VA's National Center for the study of the disorder was established in 1989. The multi-site center is a collaborative effort based at four VA hospitals around the country: at White River Junction, Vt.; West Haven, Conn.; Palo Alto, Calif.; and Boston.

Family planning classes at St. Elizabeth's

St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Boston is offering a natural family planning course beginning Thursday, Feb. 11.

The natural method of family planning provides information about planning, postponing, or avoiding a pregnancy. This method is free of dangerous side effects because it uses not artificial means.

The classes meet monthly for four consecutive months. The fee for the course is \$60 and pre-registration is required. Call 789-2430 for more details.

Support group meets

A women's support group focusing on strength, wellness, self-esteem, and life changes after age 45 begins in mid-January. Women from Arlington and the surrounding area are welcome. Call 648-0674 for more information.

State is ranked on diabetes care

The American Diabetes Association has released a new state-by-state assessment showing that Massachusetts ranks sixth in the nation in providing services for people with diabetes. The Diabetes Index also shows, however, that there are still many areas of diabetes care in Massachusetts that need improvement.

Every 60 seconds, another person joins the 14 million Americans who have diabetes, a chronic and serious disease that will affect their lives forever. Some will lose their sight, others may lose a leg or foot. All of them face increased risk for heart disease, kidney disease and stroke. And for 150,000 Americans every year, diabetes will be fatal.

Ideally, people with diabetes should have access to affordable, quality medical treatment in the care of this disease and prevention of its life-threatening complications. In many states, however, diabetes care is too expensive, inaccessible, cul-

linary of community health at Tufts' medical school, who supervised the directory's development. "Not only can it affect virtually every organ system in the body, but it touches on almost every aspect of a person's life: family relationships, employment, finances, legal matters. AIDS is the biggest challenge that I face as an urban physician."

While primary-care doctors do not have expertise in many of the social and legal issues that AIDS patients confront, it is intrinsic to the concept of comprehensive care that doctors be able to refer patients to others who can help. The directory was the brainchild of Dr. Eric Ganz, a 1992 graduate of Tufts' medical school, who produced the first edition during his first year of medical school.

"It was designed primarily for family physicians in rural or suburban areas of Massachusetts who don't have regular access to seminars and academic medical centers where

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Seminars: 10:30 am — Attorney Bob Flynn of Flynn, Hardy & Cohn. Topic: Purchase & Sale and the closing process.

12:30 pm — Vickie Gaslin of Credit Data of New England. Topic: Credit reports.

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ARLINGTON NEWS

Officers exonerated

By E.H. Stockstill
ADVOCATE STAFF WRITER

An eight-person jury in a federal lawsuit involving Arlington recently found in favor of the town.

The federal civil rights suit also involved the city of Cambridge and two police officers, one from each community, according to lawyers on the case.

Donald Green, a one-time resident of Cambridge who currently lives in Revere, last year accused Arlington, Cambridge and the two officers of civil rights violations stemming from his arrest on motor vehicle violations.

The case was tried in U.S. District Court in Boston. The jury reached its decision on Dec. 22, court officials said.

Lieutenant Paul Dooley of Arlington and Patrolman Thomas Granger of Cambridge were the two policemen named in the suit, lawyers said.

According to Arlington's Town Counsel John Maher, the charges brought by Green included accusations that he had been arrested without probable cause and that he had been mistreated by both Granger and Dooley.

Green was arrested in Cambridge for various motor vehicle violations, Maher said.

According to Maher, federal civil rights law does not always hold an employer liable for the actions of an employee. It must be shown that the employee was following the orders of the employer, Maher said. If that is proven, then the employer may be

held liable for actions taken by an employee.

Such was not proven in this case, Maher said.

"The position of the town and Mr. Dooley was vindicated," Maher said. "Obviously in the final analysis, they (the jury) didn't believe Green's story."

According to Nancy Merrick, one of the defense attorneys in the case, Green's case was clearly one that should never have been brought to court in the first place.

"His story was totally preposterous," she said. "The most difficult part was that these two officers were put through this because of this guy's nonsense."

Green's attorney could not be reached for comment.

Both officers reportedly have good records within their police forces.

According those involved with the case, Granger had previous offenses on his record, including driving while under the influence of alcohol, at the time of his arrest.

Merrick indicated that Green was seeking around \$300,000 in damages, but U.S. District Court officials would not confirm that amount.

"I think the officers should be applauded for what they did," Merrick said in an interview. "I just hope this doesn't have a chilling effect on their enthusiasm, for the public's sake."

Arlington Police Director John Carroll said of Dooley: "He has an excellent reputation. He's a very thorough officer ... very meticulous."

Chagnon case set for motions

A hearing in the case of a 39-year-old Arlington man charged last October with attempting to arrange the assassinations of two undercover State Police Troopers will be held next month. The hearing, for non-evidentiary motions, is set for Feb. 16 at Brockton Superior Court. Arthur "Butch" Chagnon was indicted by a grand jury Oct. 15 and charged with soliciting a hitman to murder two narcotics division troopers, a common law offense. Chagnon was serving time at the Plymouth Forestry Camp correctional facility in Brockton on earlier charges of drug trafficking conspiracy when the alleged incident occurred. Murder solicitation can carry a maximum penalty of life in prison.

Assault and battery case dismissed

Assault and battery charges against two Arlington men arrested last year were dismissed Dec. 18, according to a court spokeswoman. John Riehie, 30, and Joseph Tedesco, both of Mass. Ave. in Arlington were charged with assault and battery. Tedesco was also charged with possession of a dangerous weapon without proper identification. All the charges were dismissed, according to the spokeswoman. According to police, the two, who are roommates, were involved in a dispute when Tedesco sprayed Richie in the face with a can of mace.

Trial date set for Melrose, Everett men

Two men arrested in Arlington in December are scheduled to go to pre-trial conference next month in a Malden court on a number of charges, including armed robbery, a court spokesman said.

spokeswoman said: Joseph D'Ambrosio, 37, of Melrose, and Robert Wilson, 40, of Everett were arrested after a high-speed chase from Woburn, through Lexington and into Arlington. The pretrial conference is set for Feb. 4. The two men allegedly stole more than \$1000, along with other items, from the Woburn Purity Supreme grocery store on Dec. 24. D'Ambrosio was charged with armed robbery and possession of a hypodermic needle; Wilson was charged with armed robbery, failure to stop for a police officer and operating a motor vehicle negligently to endanger lives. Police said a gun was used in the alleged holdup at the Woburn Purity.

Pretrial hearing to be held for local man

A man accused of assaulting his wife with a vacuum cleaner will be in a Cambridge court Jan. 25 for a pretrial hearing. Daniel Cotter of Arlington is charged with assault by means of a dangerous weapon, the vacuum cleaner, during an incident on Dec. 24, 1992.

Arlington A & B case dismissed

The case of a Trowbridge Street man charged with assault and battery has been dismissed without prejudice, according to a court spokeswoman. Anthony DiCampo was accused of hitting his wife in the face with a pie plate during an incident on Jan. 3. No further details on the incident were available, and police did not know whether a pie or any filling was in the plate at the time of the incident. The charges were dismissed on Jan. 3, the spokeswoman said.

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Sister City News

Sister City news

A member of the Sister City project gives us the following report:

Arlington received enthusiastic greetings from its sister city of Teosinte, El Salvador as the villagers approach their first year since the end of the decade-long civil war. The report from Teosinte also stated that contrary to earlier reports, the villagers will not relocate to another part of El Salvador. Due to the poor agricultural conditions in Teosinte, villagers had considered attempting to secure more fertile land. Members of the Arlington Sister City Project will continue to aid Teosinte in its efforts to find other means of self-support such as an ongoing embroidery workshop.

In Arlington, we are gearing up for participation in a nationwide caravan of trucks carrying goods to El Salvador to aid in the postwar rebuilding efforts sponsored by Pastors for Peace and the U.S. Share Foundation. Arlington has joined groups in Cambridge, Watertown and other New England communities in pledging money toward the purchase of a truck which will be sent in February to the Chaletango province (where Teosinte is located) for use by the villages. Many thanks to all those who responded to our fundraising for this project. The organization raised over \$500 in less than two weeks.

Space in the truck will be used to send items that the villagers need to rebuild their economy. Teosinte is currently preparing a list of specific items they need. In the meantime, Arlington residents are being asked to contact the Arlington Sister City Project if they have items the village will most likely wish to have, including nonprescription drugs and first aid supplies, cloth, garden or small farming tools, summer clothing in good condition, and school and office supplies. If any resident has an item to donate or question about this project, call Judi Paradis at 646-3976.

Dean Stevens, a Boston-based folk singer, who has travelled extensively in Central America, will speak at the next monthly meeting. Stevens accompanied the delegation to Teosinte in August, and returned again to celebrate Christmas in Teosinte and adjoining villages that have sister city relationships with Belmont and Watertown. Arlington sent holiday greetings with Stevens along with money, medical supplies, flower seeds, toys and solar lanterns.

The China trip will not include home stays, but will provide an opportunity to meet and have discussions with a number of Chinese citizens, as well as guided sightseeing in each city.

Applicants for both the AYVEP program and the Sister City program will be required to participate in a comprehensive orientation program which will begin in late January or early February.

Applications for either or both trips should be requested as soon as possible, since the deadline is only days away.

Further information about the Sister City trip can be obtained by calling Dick Smith at 648-1750; about the AYVEP trip by calling Donna Harris at 446-8030.

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Officers exonerated

By E.H. Stockstill
ADVOCATE STAFF WRITER

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According to Nancy

ARLINGTON NEWS

POLICE LOG

ARRESTS

■ According to police, a 34-year-old Mass. Avenue man was arrested last week and charged with larceny by check. Police said the man had cashed the checks after taking them from an acquaintance.

VANDALISM

■ On Monday, Jan. 11 at 12:22 p.m., a commercial property at a Broadway address was reported vandalized.
 ■ At 8:34 a.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 12, an Everett Street residence was reported vandalized.
 ■ An Arnold Street residence was reported vandalized at 11:21 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 14.
 ■ Vandalism at the MBTA station in Arlington Heights was reported to police Saturday, Jan. 16 at 2:43 a.m.
 ■ Sunday, Jan. 17 at 9:33 a.m., a motor vehicle was reported vandalized at a Newland Road address.

LARCENIES AND BREAK-INS

■ An IBM computer was reported stolen from Arlington High School on Jan. 8 at 8:16 a.m.
 ■ On Monday, Jan. 11 at 11:44 p.m., an attempted theft at the St. James rectory was reported to police.
 ■ At 9:22 a.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 13, the Dallin School was reported broken into and entered.
 ■ There was an attempted theft at a Water Street parking lot reported to police Jan. 13 at 5:20 p.m.
 ■ An attempted theft at the municipal lot in Arlington Center was reported to police at 5:28 p.m. on Jan. 13.
 ■ Thursday, Jan. 14 at 12:48 a.m., a residential breaking and entering at a Park Terrace address was reported to police.
 ■ Around \$1500 in tools were reported stolen from a pickup truck at a Teel Street address on Jan. 14 at 7:25 p.m.
 ■ A robbery at a Park Terrace address was reported to police Jan. 14 at 11:06 p.m.
 ■ According to police, a Marathon

Street resident was assaulted in Thorndike Field area at 10:35 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 16. Police said the resident was assaulted by someone with a ski mask and gloves. The man also reportedly had a youthful-sounding voice, police said. According to police, the masked individual was apparently seeking money and jewelry and fled the scene after he was told that there was none to be had. No injuries were reported to police. "That gets beyond a fraternity prank," Police Director John Carroll said when asked if the incident might have been the result of a dare. "This is not a prank. We're treating this as very serious."

■ According to police, a television set and more than \$100 in tools were reported stolen from a Park Avenue address.
 ■ At 10:41 p.m. on Jan. 16, an unarmed robbery at a Milton Street address was reported to police.
 ■ A 1984 Mazda was broken into at a Crosby Street address on Jan. 16 at 11:30 p.m., police said.
 ■ Reported to police at 10:55 a.m. on Sunday, Jan. 17 was an alleged breaking and entering of a 1992 Nissan at a College Avenue address.
 ■ At 12:05 a.m. on Monday, Jan. 18, a breaking and entering at the Thompson School was reported. According to Principal Michael McCabe, a pencil sharpener was stolen from the school's music room.

MISCELLANEOUS

■ On Monday, Jan. 11, accidents at the following locations were reported to police: the corner of Addison and Pleasant streets at 9:21 a.m.; the corner of Grove and Dudley streets at 1:03 p.m.; a Summer Street address at 2:29 p.m.; Waldo Road address at 9:29 p.m. No injuries in any of the accidents were reported.
 ■ A family disturbance at an Exeter Street address was reported Jan. 11 at 3:59 p.m.
 ■ On Tuesday, Jan. 12 at 5:33 a.m., a family disturbance at a Fremont Street address was reported.
 ■ Accidents at the following addresses were reported on Jan. 12: a Pleasant Street address at 7:59 a.m.; along the Mystic River at Beacon Street at 8:12 a.m.; a Pleasant Street address at 8:18 a.m.
 ■ An alleged assault and battery at a Mass. Avenue address was reported to police at 1:04 p.m. on Jan. 12; later at 5:24 p.m., an alleged assault and

battery at a Walnut Street was reported.

■ Threats at the Symmes Hospital were reported to police Jan. 12 at 7:53 p.m.

■ A family disturbance at a Parker Street address was reported to police at 11:08 a.m. on Jan. 12.

■ On Wednesday, Jan. 13, accidents at the following locations were reported: an Acton Street address at 7:33 a.m.; the corner of Washington and Candia streets at 7:36 a.m.; the corner of Forest Street and Frazer Road at 7:36 a.m.; the corner of Mystic and Russell streets at 7:52 a.m.; an Appleton Street address at 8:11 a.m.; a Sutherland Road address at 8:54 a.m.; the corner of Henry and Elwern roads at 10:13 a.m.; the corner of Warren and Medford streets at 4:23 p.m.; and the corner of Mass. Avenue and Fairmont streets at 6:51 p.m. No injuries in any of the accidents were reported.

■ Youths were reported gathering at the following locations on Jan. 13: a Mill Street address at 2:45 p.m.; and the corner of Summer and Forest streets at 3:10 p.m.

■ Family disturbances were reported at the following locations on Jan. 13: a Hibbert Street address at 5:24 p.m.; an Appleton Place address at 5:28 p.m.; and an Arizona Terrace address at 9:06 p.m.

■ On Thursday, Jan. 14, accidents at the following addresses were reported: the corner of Mass. Avenue and Pleasant Street at 10:25 a.m.; and the corner of Mass. Avenue at 7:17 p.m.

■ A summons was served to someone at a Summer Street address Jan. 14 at 5:37 p.m.

■ At 7:34 p.m. on Jan. 14, a warrant was served to someone in Roslindale.

■ At a Windsor Street address, a family disturbance was reported to police at 10:09 p.m. on Jan. 14.

■ On Friday, Jan. 15, police received reports of accidents at the following locations: the corner of Mass. Avenue and Library Way; the corner of Hemlock and Summer streets Jan. 15 at 3:27 p.m.; the corner of Appleton Street and Park Avenue at 3:28 p.m.; and the corner of Park and Florence avenues at 3:52 p.m. No injuries in any of the accidents were reported.

■ Police also received reports of accidents at a Spring Street address, at 2:10 p.m., and a Forest Street

address, at 3:51 p.m., on Jan. 15. Injuries were reported in both of those accidents.

■ A summons was served to someone at a Mill Street Jan. 15 at 4:29 p.m., police reported.

■ Police reported a family disturbance at a Varnum Street address at 5:55 p.m. on Jan. 15.

■ A domestic disturbance at a Mass. Avenue address was reported on Jan. 14 around 10 p.m.

■ Saturday, Jan. 16 at 1:20 p.m., a family disturbance at a George Street address was reported.

■ Accidents at the following locations were reported to police on Jan. 16: the corner of Grafton Street and Broadway at 11:55 a.m.; the corner of Pleasant Street and Hopkins Road at 12:33 p.m.; an Arizona Terrace address at 12:37 p.m.; and the corner of Park and Wollaston avenues at 5:27 p.m. No injuries were reported.

■ There was a family disturbance reported a Maynard Street address on Jan. 16 at 1:10 p.m.

■ A fight at a Hamilton Road address was reported to police at 6:42 p.m. on Jan. 16.

■ Youths were reported gathering at a Bartlet Street address on Jan. 16 at 11:21 p.m.

■ On Jan. 17, threats at a Cedar Avenue address were reported to police at 9:09 p.m.

■ At 11:52 p.m., a fight at a Waldo Road address was reported to police on Jan. 17.

■ Family disturbances at the following locations were reported to police on Monday, Jan. 18: a Mountain Avenue address at 3:59 p.m.; and a Mass. Avenue address at 11:25 p.m.

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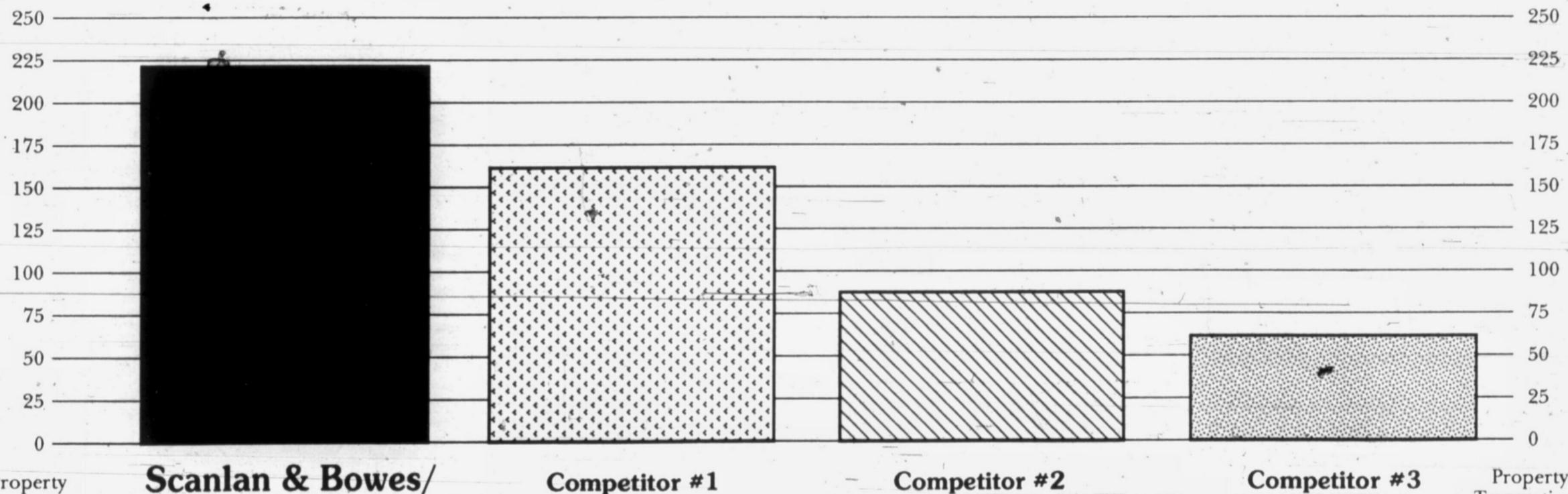
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The Arlington Advocate

COMMENT



The Birthplace of "Uncle Sam"
 Samuel Wilson

Editorial

Common Ground

As January moves into February, the nation watches a change in Presidents, and the town prepares for spring elections. The continuing debate in Arlington about the Nativity scene that was installed on town property over Christmas begins to seem a minor matter compared with the challenges that face our community's day-to-day health, education and welfare.

Yet the creche controversy continues. Town counsel John Maher was quoted in last week's paper telling Selectmen he's gotten more phone calls on this issue than on any other in his 18-year tenure. He also told Selectmen he would strongly advise against reinstalling the manger scene on the Jefferson Cutter House lawn next year. That triggered a whole new round of phone calls to the town counsel's office — not all of them extending a warm Christmas blessing to Mr. Maher.

With many pressing concerns facing the community, some have suggested that it is a waste of time to continue to haggle over this abstract and philosophical issue. Even some of those who have taken up cudgels seem to feel more is being made of the debate than is warranted. "There are many offensive things" in society today, noted one of our letter writers recently; "Pornography, thoughtless crime, child abuse, hunger and disease — but a newborn child in a crib ... is not one of them." Hard to argue with that.

But if this debate is about the meaning of the separation of church and state in 1993 — well, we've got time for that. If it is an honest effort to understand the Bill of Rights and the Establishment Clause, we've got the time. If it is a community's attempt to ask what common ground we hold that truly makes us a community, we've got time for that, too.

There have been a few sour notes, though, that haven't exactly dignified the debate. Those who have taken up the line that the rights of the majority are being trampled on are pretty far off the mark. Is it our imagination, or is there a thinly disguised disrespect, even disgust, for those in the minority that accompanies this argument?

A few families in town have detected as much. In conversations we have heard about, they have asked themselves whether they want to be a part of a community that is dominated by aggressively majoritarian sentiment on religious issues.

The irony of it all is that some who have stood up for the Christmas creche have done so in a spirit that is not much in keeping with the giving and forgiving spirit of Christmas.

Discord, at times, seems to be all around us. We are accustomed to reading of the mindless mayhem of Boston's inner city. But in recent months a racial brawl erupted at Medford High School, and in Winchester an angry white student assaulted a black student with a Mace-like substance.

The schools have become a focal point of community attempts to come to grips with racial and ethnic diversity and the tensions that sometimes follow. In Winchester, the ugly outburst was met almost immediately by a public demonstration for tolerance and harmony.

In Arlington, we are told, there are many teachers who recognize the cultural, ethnic and religious differences among their students and who are doing their best to make that an opportunity for education rather than discord. Whether one labels it with the unwieldy but in vogue term of "multiculturalism" or not, there is surely a lot schools can do to teach young citizens to get along.

Any well-taught history class should speak directly to concerns we have today. For three centuries Americans have been trying to blend unity with diversity. It is an effort that is challenged with each new immigrant wave and with every new integration of blacks with whites, Irish Catholics with Yankee Protestants, Christians with Jews.

What students need to know is that our commonality will never be a matter of religion or ethnicity or race. What we hold in common as Americans is an experimental but inspiring creed: the idea that we are all political equals deserving of equal respect — even those in the smallest minority.



Church's good will creates 'urban oasis'

By Terry Marotta
 HARTE-HANKS COLUMNIST

A hundred years ago, Pilgrim Church, in the Uphams Corner section of Boston, was an elegant lady of a building adorned by a large rose window and a tower and the ruffled cuffs of ivy that climbed its red brick sides. A photo taken of its sanctuary back then shows the huge pipe organ, the high vaulted ceiling with its polished wood, and at the front, in ornate gold lettering, a sign reading, "Consider the Lilies of the Field," of those blossoms that tolled neither do they spin.

Today, the rose window is boarded up, the tower gone, the sanctuary missing its lofty upper realms — all victims of a fire in the early '70s. Another sign, hand-lettered in poster paints, leans against the large main doors. "Eat lunch here — 1.50," it reads. Today, Pilgrim Congregational Church is where Reverend David Venator and his wife Margaret conduct their special brand of ministry, as they have been doing for the last three decades.

When I first met Margaret almost four years ago, she was stirring a large pot of soup, deep in the

church's basement. Since then, I have dropped by from time to time. When I dropped by last week, she was still stirring, and serving — boiled ham, potatoes and mixed vegetables — to a man with a limp who muttered querulously to himself.

Behind her, at the back of what was once the sanctuary, are a stained-glass window of a kneeling Jesus, a plaque dedicated to the pastor here from 1890 to 1907, and an honor roll, worked in brass, listing members of the community who served in the Great War. The names, without exception, are English.

Today, the area is more mixed, both racially and ethnically. The children getting out of the Catholic school two doors down buy snacks at a fast food place run by the Nation of Islam — and the small core of Congregationalists who still come here to David's Sunday services number only about 12 and fit with room to spare in the tiny chapel.

Everyone else comes for a different kind of sustenance. Some come for Margaret's lunches, only a third of whose cost is covered by a grant from the Walk for Hunger. Some come to sleep, when, at night, the sanctuary becomes an overflow shelter for the homeless. Others come to

use the day care center, the thrift shop, the several other local agencies tucked under the eaves. All in all, it's not your typical church.

But David is proud of what goes on here. "A church in the city should be a sanctuary," he says, "an urban oasis. This place is. We try to serve this community 24 hours a day."

It hasn't always been easy. The morning of my visit, for example, a jury arrived by bus to inspect the spot across the street where a young man was murdered last summer. "Our house has been broken into, oh, 12 to 20 times," says Margaret. "One day, I was sitting in church, and a bullet came through the window and lodged in the door frame. But I am not afraid here. It's hard to carry fear with you all the time and stay well."

Margaret and David were married in 1965, came to Pilgrim Church, and put on the first of many Thanksgiving dinners for the community that year. Now they do Christmas dinner too, as well as the hot lunches. "Anyone can eat here," she says, "as long as they're not drunk. Those who can, pay; everyone else eats free," including the 10 or so volunteers who help put it all on.

"There's no status here," she goes on, "there's no beauty. But there is

good will. People are judged not by their credentials but for themselves alone. And what I call the curtain of convention does not come down between people." As she talks, an elderly couple who live in a van relax over coffee and converse pleasantly with the man who came in muttering.

It helps to have a sense of humor, and Margaret does. "I've often thought all this would make a great setting for a play: stable central characters, drama, pathos, a hint of the supernatural...." But then she grows more serious. "I feel calmer as I grow older, less anxious about tomorrow and where we'll get the money we need to keep this going — fewer and fewer can come up with the \$1.50. But there are acres of diamonds right beneath our noses, as the famous preacher Gordon Conwell used to say; it's all in how you look at it."

"This is the touchstone, the mark, the place where you can come and feel comfortable," David concludes. "And we are free here," Margaret adds with a smile, as another diner steps up with his plate.

Terry Marotta is a freelance writer who lives in Winchester

Letters to the Editor

measures should be taken for the walkers' safety, but it must be considered that this path is the only safe, legal route for bikers. Posted speed limits enforced by police (as in Boulder, Colo.) are one reasonable arrangement. I had understood that the Arlington police had purchased a motorcycle to patrol the path.

The original bikeway was a serious alternative to road transportation, for commuting and other uses, for many people. This is the intent of the federal bill that supported it, as emphasized by the group bicycle event led by representative Kennedy along this path in late summer. The new obstacles significantly compromise this intent, and should be replaced by more reasonable precautions.

Nicholas Newell
 Jason Street

times to leave a vehicle out.

So residents of Arlington, if you see a vehicle parked overnight call your Police Department and let them know, so we can ticket all overnight violators in town. You should also feel free to call the town manager and Director Carroll to discuss overnight parking matters.

Richard Femla
 Summer Street

private fund.) Wouldn't it be a gesture of outreach to all sections of the town if each year the Nativity scene was displayed on the lawn of a different Christian church?

Wouldn't such outreach make the scene more visible over the years to more of the townspeople and underline the Christian roots behind its universal message?

Charles Wagner
 Norfolk Road

Against theocracy

To the editor:

We write to compliment the editor on his sensible and eloquent editorial concurring in Mr. Maher's opinion that the Town should not in the future sponsor a creche on the Cutter House grounds. In addition, we'd like to comment on some letters that appeared in the same issue of the Advocate.

It must be understood that a creche is not simply a depiction of a cute baby surrounded by cuddly farm animals, something out of Beatrix Potter; the creche is a central symbol of Christian belief. When the Town erects and maintains a creche, it is advocating religion in general, and the Christian faith in particular.

The common thread that binds the United States is woven of the ideals of tolerance and civil liberty. People are free to believe what they wish and to express those beliefs, no matter what the majority might favor at any given time, but the government — local, state, or federal — may not impose or restrict beliefs. Thus it makes perfect sense for individuals to express their faiths on their gravestones or in their cars or on their homes, but not for the Town to assert its belief in Christianity or even in general religion.

Finally, to those who associate personal or national virtue with religiosity, we suggest that you glance at your daily papers. Theocracies are not necessarily humane or successful, nor are religious individuals necessarily upright.

Marjorie and Martin Cohn
 Jason Street

Parking privileges

To the editor:

Brace for the storm and I don't mean snow or rain, as the saying goes. Some residents have special privileges in regard to parking overnight granted by the Selectmen because of the scenery, fresh air and separation from cars, and became fitter than I had been for a long time. Yesterday I rode on the path for the first time since the blocks were installed. I had to keep my eye on the surface of the path ahead to look for the obstacles, and, in many cases, as soon as I got up to a comfortable (and safe) speed after crossing one, I had to brake for the next. If the path remains as it is, I don't expect to use it frequently any more — it's no longer practical or fun for me to ride on. I think many others will now try the path once or twice and decide that it is too frustrating or too slow to use regularly as an alternative to the roads. I've never seen such speed blocks before. They are a hazard to bikers. In dim light, they're probably a hazard to walkers as well.

I believe that facilities for foot recreation are very important, and

anyone who has kept up with the news of recent months knows of the disturbing increase in ethnic and religious disharmony in many countries. We here in Arlington, with our long local and national traditions of tolerance and appreciation for religious diversity ought to be able to find a happy solution to the Nativity scene location problem — one which all residents can feel good about, and the display itself, though still visible at holiday time, ceases to be a thorn of controversy and is permitted to convey its original message of "Peace on earth, goodwill to all."

As one who happens to have been raised in the Christian faith and who has lived in Arlington for more than three decades, I have always felt a tinge of regret that the tokens of a beautiful Christian story were not being displayed where they ought to be — on the publicly visible lawns of one or more of the many Christian churches in town. In the town where I grew up each church, temple, synagogue, or meeting house exercised in its own way the freedom to present on their lands and buildings the decorations and tokens of their various holidays, feasts, and celebrations.

Isn't there a path towards a positive solution for everyone in all this? For example, couldn't a group of all or some of the town's Christian churches buy legal ownership of the Nativity scene? (I and others would be happy to contribute to such a

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COMMENT

Guest Column

Counsel offers legal history on creche issue

By John Maher
SPECIAL TO THE ADVOCATE

As counsel to the Town of Arlington I welcome this opportunity to offer my thoughts on the issue of the creche which has been erected on Whittemore Park, the site now of the Jefferson Cutter House. This has proven to be a most contentious issue in town and even threatens to divide our town on religious and ethnic lines. The purpose of this article is solely concerned with forestalling this tragic and wholly unnecessary result.

A brief history of the creche in Arlington and the evolving law as pronounced by the U.S. Supreme Court that pertains to it would be helpful in understanding this matter. Until 1989 the leading case arose out of Pawtucket, R.I. where each year in a private park the city of Pawtucket erected a Christmas display consisting of a creche, a Santa Claus figure, a banner and various Christmas trees. The city was sued and the case went all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. The issue presented was whether the erection of the display violated the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution which states in relevant part that government "shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion." This restriction on all governmental entities is most commonly referred to as the doctrine of the separation of church and state. The Court upheld the display based upon the fact that other holiday symbols were present, i.e., the Santa Claus, and the city had spent only minimal funds to buy the creche and erect and maintain the display. The sharply divided court applied the three-pronged test of *Lemon v. Kurtzman* 403 U.S. 602 that this particular governmental act (1) served a secular purpose, i.e., celebration of the holiday season (2) did not foster an excessive entanglement of government and religion, i.e., Pawtucket did not work with any particular church in erecting the display and (3) the primary effect was neither to advance nor inhibit religion.

With this criteria established by the court the erection of the creche in Arlington underwent necessary changes. Where before it was erected by town employees within regular working hours the town manager requested, acting upon my advice, that volunteers be solicited to put the display up on a weekend. Secular symbols of a traditional nature were added including a snowman, a Santa Claus and toy soldiers. It is at least arguable that these factors brought the Arlington display within the requirements of the Pawtucket decision.

On July 3, 1989 the Supreme Court changed the rules in deciding *County of Allegheny et al. v. American Civil Liberties Union, Greater Pittsburgh Chapter, et al.* 492 U.S. 573 and a companion case. This litigation arose from the placement of two recurring holiday displays located on public property in downtown Pittsburgh. The first, a creche depicting the Christian Nativity scene, was placed on the Grand Staircase of the Allegheny County Courthouse, which is the "main," "most beautiful," and "most public" part of the courthouse. The creche was donated by the Holy Name Society, a Roman Catholic group, and bore a sign to that effect. Its manger had at its crest an angel bearing a banner proclaiming "Gloria in Excelsis Deo," meaning "Glory to God in the Highest." The second of the holiday displays in question was an 18-foot Chanukah Menorah or candelabrum, which was placed just outside the City-County Building next to the city's 45-foot decorated Christmas tree. At the foot of the tree was a sign bearing the mayor's name and containing a text declaring the city's "salute to liberty." The Menorah was owned by Chabad, a Jewish group, but was stored, erected, and removed each year by the city. Respondents, the Greater Pittsburgh Chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union and seven local residents, filed suit seeking permanently to

enjoin the county from displaying the creche and the city from displaying the Menorah on the grounds that the displays violated the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment, made applicable to state governments by the Fourteenth Amendment. The District Court denied relief relying on *Lynch v. Donnelly* 465 U.S. 668. The Court of Appeals reversed, distinguishing *Lynch v. Donnelly* and holding that the creche and the Menorah in the present case must be understood as an unpermissible governmental endorsement of Christianity and Judaism citing the three-pronged test of *Lemon v. Kurtzman* 403 U.S. 602. Upon review the Supreme Court upheld the Menorah display but struck down the creche.

The Menorah display was differentiated from the creche on the grounds that it was incidental to the large Christmas tree display and in conjunction with the "salute to liberty" sign" was seen more as promotion of religious freedom rather than an endorsement of a particular religion.

The creche's effect, on the other hand was seen to present an endorsement of a particular religion. Although not specifically stating as much, the Court appears to abandon the rationale of *Lynch* and the three-pronged test borrowed from *Kurtzman*. Simply stated, it appears that the majority of the Court in this again sharply divided opinion sees the appropriate test as being whether the display viewed as a whole was the celebration of a holiday, with any religious portion thereof merely an adjunct, or rather, whether the display in the context that it was presented could be reasonably inferred to be an official endorsement of a particular religion.

When presented with the objections by Mr. Eric Chester to the creche before the Board of Select-

men and the town manager at their Dec. 14, 1992 meeting my immediate reaction as counsel to the town was to defend the creche as being in compliance with the decisions of the Supreme Court. An opportunity for a rereading of the Allegheny County case and more sober reflection led me to the only legal conclusion possible, that is, that the Arlington display in its current form is violative of the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment. The scene consists of a facsimile of a stable with various figures of shepherds, domestic animals, wise men, Mary, Joseph, and the Christ child. On each side of the stable are six to eight other figures including wooden toy soldiers, a Santa Claus and a snowman. Several Christmas trees donated by a local organization were placed in the area but were apparently stolen.

It is my opinion that the conclusion is inescapable that the Arlington display represents the endorsement of the Christian religion. The overwhelming impression given to one standing in front of the display is that the display is about the birth of Christ. The aforementioned soldiers, snowman and Santa Claus figures are clearly on the sidelines and can even be seen as being in a supportive or guardian posture for the creche itself. Simply stated, the display is a religious display and not a holiday display. It is primarily a depiction of the birth of Christ and as such is violative of the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment according to the Allegheny decision. The future erection of the creche without any substantive changes would make the town susceptible to litigation. In my view the town would not be successful in defending this litigation.

The choices presented to town officials are two. Either move the creche to private property or substantially change it. Changes would be necessary to reduce the dominant aspect of the creche so as to make it less of a central presence. Secular symbols would need to be added and their placement made more prominent. The erection of Christmas trees and other holiday symbols would aid this end. A sign welcoming other holiday symbols or those of other religious beliefs would add substantially to the chances of it being upheld.

Two final points need emphasis. My responsibility to my client, the Town of Arlington, is to advise its officials how to conform their public acts to the law regardless of my own religious or political beliefs. Comments to the effect that my motivation is otherwise are misplaced.

Secondly, the complaint that I have heard most often is that the removal of the creche would result in subdivision of majority rule. This belief misses the mark in my view and, although sincerely held, is in itself subversive of our system of government, that of a government of laws not men. The Bill of Rights was enacted for the very purpose of preventing the majority, by the acts of their elected representatives, from dictating their biases and beliefs to the minority. In some respect we are all a member of some minority. Most certainly we are members of a community called Arlington with a rich history of diverse backgrounds and respect for others and their traditions and beliefs. It would be antithetical to this history if a majority could insist upon the town's endorsement of a particular religious belief. It would also be against the law.

Instead, I invite the citizens of Arlington to join their efforts with those of the selectmen, the town manager and myself in resolving this matter in such a way that celebrates our diversity in a manner consistent with the provisions of the First Amendment.

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ELECTION NEWS

McKenna makes case in Selectmen's race

(The following is a press release from John M. McKenna, a candidate for the Board of Selectmen.)

After careful consideration, John M. McKenna enthusiastically announces his candidacy for the Arlington Board of Selectmen. John McKenna and his wife of 13 years, Elaine Cipolla McKenna, are lifelong residents of Arlington, and are graduates of Arlington High School. The McKennas take pride in continuing

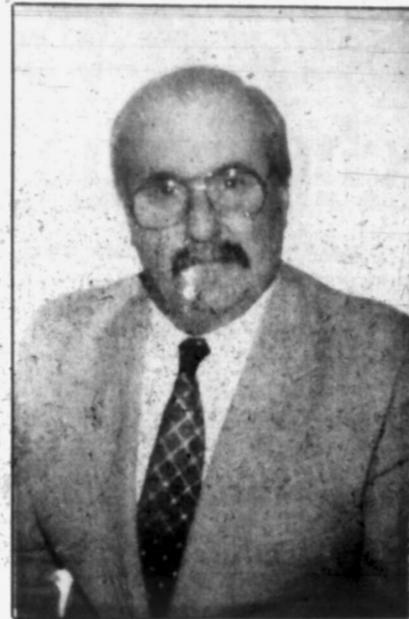
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to make Arlington their home. John cares about the future of Arlington and the welfare of its citizens.

McKenna, as in all his other endeavors promises to bring a common sense, practical approach to the issues facing the town of Arlington. His 19 years of experience as a successful small business owner best qualifies him as the candidate most knowledgeable and capable of addressing the concerns facing local business. Currently employed as supervisor of dormitory security, McKenna is responsible for security management of housing and food services at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

By virtue of his unique experience and management capabilities, McKenna continually demonstrates a willingness to evaluate sensitive topics and problem solve cooperatively. His uncompromising integrity, honesty and fairness will be an



John M. McKenna

asset to the Arlington Board of Selectmen.

If you want a common sense, practical approach to responsible town government, consider John M. McKenna for one of your two votes to the Arlington Board of Selectmen.

Goodman, candidate for School Committee, writes open letter

(The following was submitted for publication by Barbara Goodman, a candidate for School Committee.)

Dear Neighbor:

I came to Arlington 14 years ago, attracted by its libraries, parks, and other community resources. I stayed because I liked the strong sense of community here. Arlington is a town that cares about its citizens, where resources like the Senior Center, the Center for the Arts, and the Minute-man Bike Path improve the quality of life for old and young. As a parent and teacher, I want to contribute to our town by becoming an active member of the School Committee. I ask for one of your three votes on March 6.

Education in Arlington is at a crossroads. Cutbacks in federal and state aid and Proposition 2½ have reduced the funds available to our

schools. Yet despite fiscal constraints, Arlington's many fine educators do excellent work, involving students in interesting learning projects and developing their own exciting materials.

I have visited our seven elementary schools and the junior and senior high schools; spoken to administrators, teachers, parents, and community leaders; read reports; and attended School Committee meetings. I have seen many individual examples of quality education. But I have also seen a system without an overall sense of direction. Programming among schools and grade levels is inconsistent. Our schools lack a cohesive K-12 plan to prepare our students for the future.

Responsibility for this lack of direction lies with the School Committee. Incapable of functioning effectively as a group, they have failed to develop a plan for what our schools should accomplish. Neither have they provided adequate guidance for the superintendent.

The school committee must be accountable to the community for providing a blueprint for our schools.



Barbara Goodman

Only then will parents feel assured that their children will be well prepared for the future. Only then will taxpayers know their money is being spent wisely.

The situation facing us is urgent. The economy of the 21st century depends upon an educated work force. American businesses seek new recruits who not only have mastered basic skills but can work cooperatively in teams, solve complex problems across disciplines, and use computers and emerging technologies. But Arlington public schools, like most schools across the country, have not yet met these new educational challenges.

ELECTION, See page 11A

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